



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

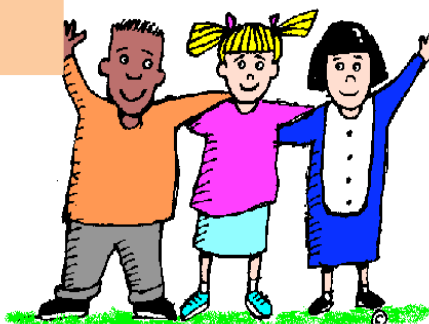
## District of Columbia Public Schools ***PRIVATE AND RELIGIOUS PROCEDURES***

### CHILD FIND

Private and Religious  
Schools in the District  
of Columbia

### PARENTALLY PLACED STUDENTS

With a Disability or  
Suspected of Having a  
Disability



**LOCATE  
IDENTIFY  
EVALUATE**

**DCPS Private-Religious Office (DC PRO)**

Early Stages  
1125 New Jersey Ave NW, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20001  
(202) 698-8037  
[PRO@earlystagesdc.org](mailto:PRO@earlystagesdc.org)

*Together We Stand for the Children!*

*(Revised 02/09/09)*

## Introduction

### Parentally Placed Students in Private and Religious Schools

DC Public Schools is responsible for **locating, identifying, and evaluating** all students with disabilities or suspected of having a disability who are parentally placed in private and religious elementary and secondary schools located in the District of Columbia. This includes children who live in the District of Columbia and attend a private or religious school in the District, as well as children who **do not** live in the District of Columbia but attend a private-religious school in the District. Parents of students who are seeking services should contact the Private-Religious Office.

#### **Child Find** (For children 5 and up)

Parents seeking Child Find or Special Education Services for a child who attends a private or religious school located in the District of Columbia, should contact the Private and Religious Office. Parents/Legal Guardians can make an appointment to share their concerns, receive guidance on the process, or pick up a referral packet. The referral packet contains information on procedures and the appropriate forms with instructions for completing them. Once the documents are completed they should be returned to the Private and Religious Office as soon as possible. For added convenience the signed documents can be faxed. Once the office receives the packet, it is reviewed and a master copy is made for the office file. The original will be sent with a cover letter to the Principal and/or Special Education Coordinator at the child's neighborhood public school where all subsequent discussions and decisions take place.

*Note: For D.C. residents the neighborhood school is the public school closest to the student's residence. For non-residents the neighborhood school is the public school closest to the D.C. private-religious school the child is attending.*



## **Private Religious Office (PRO) Steps:**

Parents should first register their child as a non-attending student at the Private-Religious Office (PRO) or at the appropriate cluster school listed in this packet. If the registration is completed at a cluster school, the school will fax a copy to the PRO.

Parents may request that a PRO referral packet be mailed to them or they can pick up a packet from the Private Religious Office, the appropriate cluster school, their child's private-religious school, or go to the PRO website: [www.dcps.dc.gov/pro](http://www.dcps.dc.gov/pro)

Once all forms are completed by the parent and private-religious school with appropriate signatures, the forms should be faxed or hand-delivered to the PRO.

The approved private-religious referral packet will be mailed or delivered to the child's neighborhood public school with a letter to the Principal/Special Education Coordinator (SEC) and a signed receipt for the referral. For D.C. residents the neighborhood school is the public school closest to the student's residence. For non-residents the neighborhood school is the public school closest to the D.C. private-religious school the child is attending.

A notification letter will be sent to the parent indicating that PRO has received the completed referral and it has been forwarded to their child's neighborhood public school to start the process for confirming or ruling out a disability. The letter will also have contact information for the parent to follow up with the school.

PRO will keep in contact with the Special Education Coordinator/s as well as the Private-Religious School/s for case updates and support.

PRO will send out monthly reminders and timeline updates to the receiving schools.

PRO will be available for trainings, on-call observations, and teacher interviews in private and religious schools.

Please call PRO to schedule ON CALL training so the appropriate staff can be available.

PRO Training is available for the public and private-religious school community.

## PRIVATE AND RELIGIOUS OFFICE (PRO) REFERRALS

### **Who Should be Referred?**

Students who are placed by their parents in private schools and are suspected of having a disability and in need of special education or related services are eligible for referral.

*Note: The student must be parentally placed with tuition paid by sources other than DC Public Schools.*

### **Who Can Make Referrals?**

Parents/Guardians in cooperation with Administrators/Staff at the Private-Religious Schools can make a referral.

### **What Should Happen Before a Referral is Made?**

Before a student is referred for special education services, a pre-referral process should be implemented at the attending private or religious school. This process will ensure appropriate identification of students with disabilities. During the pre-referral phase, documentation of strategies used in the general education classroom as well as sample work products, report cards, and progress notes will provide valuable information to support the process.

*Suggestion: Maintaining portfolios for students during this process can be very helpful.*

### **What Happens During the Referral Process?**

When the private-religious school or parent determines that Special Education services may be warranted, the following steps should be implemented to initiate the referral process:

1. Contact the Private and Religious Office or the appropriate cluster school listed in this packet to obtain referral forms. They are also online at [www.dcps.dc.gov/pro](http://www.dcps.dc.gov/pro)
2. Parents and the private-religious school work collaboratively to complete the referral packet.
3. Return completed forms to the **Private-Religious Office**

#### **Early Stages Center**

1125 New Jersey Ave NW, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20001

#### **Parents:**

*Please note that all forms must be completed and **signed** by teachers and parents or it will be necessary to return them, thus delaying the processing of your request. A professional other than the child's teacher must complete the classroom observation form. The educational history form must be completed in its entirety for all students. Immunization and health records must be included for all students requesting special education. Your cooperation in completing these forms as quickly and accurately as possible is appreciated. This will enable DCPS to more accurately address the concerns and enable the screening process to move along more efficiently.*

### **What Happens During the Screening Process?**

Baseline data is collected during the screening phase. The following documents provide in-depth information about the student's academic performance and can help the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) gain a comprehensive view of the student during the pre-referral process:

- Class work
- Homework
- Quizzes/Tests
- Attendance Records
- Observation
- Anecdotal Records
- Parent Contact Logs
- Intervention Results
- A record of strategies used (effective and ineffective)

### **What Happens During the Assessment Process?**

1. DCPS staff will provide parents with a copy of the procedural safeguards informing them of their rights.
2. The Special Education Coordinator at the child's neighborhood school will invite the parents to attend a Student Evaluation Plan (SEP) meeting to develop a plan to determine which assessments may be required to confirm or rule out a disability.
3. If the student does not meet the assessment criteria, helpful classroom strategies and interventions will be discussed.
4. The MDT will obtain a signed consent for evaluation from the parents.

### **What Happens During the Eligibility Meeting?**

1. Once the assessments have been completed, they will be reviewed by the team to determine if the student is eligible for special education services.
2. If the student is found eligible the MDT will develop an appropriate Individual Education Plan (IEP).
3. The private-religious school should be invited to participate. If they are unable to attend in person other arrangements should be made.
4. If the student is found eligible for special education services DCPS welcomes the student to have his/her IEP implemented at the neighborhood school.
5. If the parents choose to decline the IEP and continue enrollment for their child in a private-religious school, an Individual Service Plan (ISP) will be developed outlining the services the child will receive under the DCPS Private-Religious School Agreement.

**Note:** Services offered per the agreement are: speech and language once per week and occupational therapy consultations twice per year. Disagreement with the services that your child will or will not receive under the terms of the DC Public Schools Private-Religious Agreement is not sufficient to request mediation or a due process hearing.

**For More Information Please Contact:**

**DCPS Private and Religious Office (DCPS PRO)**

**Early Stages Center  
1125 New Jersey Ave NW, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Washington, DC 20001  
PRO@earlystagesdc.org**

***Remember Together We Stand for the Children!***



***For parent convenience there are 4 points of access to pick up the private and religious procedures packet and the student referral forms needed to start the process.***

The locations are:

Office of Special Education  
DCPS Private-Religious  
Office  
825 North Capitol St. NE

Your Child's Private or  
Religious School

**DCPS Cluster Schools**  
(For registration and referral information)

**Cluster 1**  
Lafayette ES

**Cluster 2**  
Tyler ES

**Cluster 3**  
Brookland@  
Bunker Hill

**Cluster 4**  
Hardy Middle

**Cluster 5**  
Coolidge

DCPS PRO WEBSITE  
<https://www.dcps.dc.gov/pro>